



Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research Stockholm Branch

Research Groups

Tissue Biology Group

Tissue Biology

Ulf Eriksson Ph.D., Professor, Member

We are interested in signaling mechanisms underlying blood vessel growth, function and physiological integration in different tissues, such as in heart, skeletal muscle, brain and in tumors. Understanding how blood vessel growth, function, and physiological integration are controlled has implications for several major diseases including cardiovascular diseases, stroke, diabetes and cancer. Our research focuses on the roles of several growth factors, mainly of the VEGF/PDGF family, in these processes. In particular, we are interested in the roles of VEGF-B, and the two novel PDGF-C and PDGF-D factors. As a separate, but related, focus, a subgroup headed by Kristian Pietras is making efforts to map support functions performed by the stroma in growing tumors. This is done with the premise that decisive treatment benefit can be achieved by targeting multiple cell types and pathways that collectively sustain the growth of tumors.

The Group

- **Cunha, Sara** Ph.D. Student
- **Ehnman, Monika** Ph.D. Student
- **Folestad, Erika** Postdoctoral Fellow
- **Franco, Marcela** Research Associate
- **Fredriksson, Linda** Postdoctoral Fellow
- **Hägnan, Charlotte** Ph.D. Student
- **Li, Hong** Postdoctoral Fellow
- **Nilsson, Ingrid** Postdoctoral Fellow
- **Pietras, Kristian** Research Associate
- **Rezaian, Soheila** Senior Technician
- **Rosenlew, Carolina** Ph.D. Student
- **Vanwildemeersch Maarten** Postdoctoral Fellow
- **Wang, Xun** Ph.D. Student

Selected Publications

- Pontén, A, Folestad, E, Pietras, K, and Eriksson, U. PDGF-D induces cardiac fibrosis and proliferation of vascular smooth muscle cells in heart-sepcific transgenic mice. *Circulation Research* 11:1036-1045, 2005
 - Fredriksson, L, Li, H, Fieber, C, Li, X, and Eriksson, U. Tissue-type plasminogen activator (tPA) is a potent activator of PDGF-CC. *EMBO Journal* 23, 3793-3802, 2004
 - Bergsten, E, Uutela, M, Li, X, Pietras, K, Östman, A, Heldin, C-H, Alitalo, K, Eriksson, U. PDGF-D is a specific and protease-activated ligand for the PDGF β -receptor. *Nature Cell Biology*, 3: 512-516, 2001
 - Aase, K, von Euler, G, Li, X, Pontén, A, Thorén, P, Cao, R, Cao, Y, Olofsson, B, Gebre-Medhin, S, Pekny, M, Alitalo, K, Betsholtz, C, and Eriksson, U. VEGF-B deficient mice display an atrial conduction defect. *Circulation* 104:358-364, 2001
 - Li, X, Pontén, A, Aase, K, Karlsson, L, Abramsson, A, Uutela, M., Bäckström, G., Hellström, M, Boström, H, Li, H., Soriano, P., Betsholtz, C, Heldin, C.-H., Alitalo, K, Östman, A, and Eriksson, U. PDGF-C is a new protease-activated ligand for the PDGF- α receptor. *Nature Cell Biology* 2: 302-309, 2000
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